

Dear Chairman Powell and Commissioners,  
As a citizen who wants to be informed about the political and electoral issues that affect my life, I am greatly disappointed by the lack of informative television programming.

Local public affairs programming is virtually non-existent--constituting less than one half of 1% of all local programming. More than half of news broadcasts prior to the 2002 elections did not include a single campaign story. Our democracy is at risk when many Americans don't know basic facts about the candidates or the issues, as was the case in the 2000 elections.

Since broadcasters have clearly failed in their obligation to serve the public interest, the FCC should define meaningful public interest requirements that include local civic and electoral affairs programming. At a minimum, broadcasters should air three hours per week of local civic and electoral affairs programming, with at least two hours devoted to substantive election coverage in the six weeks prior to Election Day.

As the elections approach, a well-functioning democracy demands that citizens have access to a diversity of opinions and voices on the choices confronting us.

It has also become increasingly clear to me that the political campaign commercials being aired on both sides contain misleading statements that have an enormous impact in coloring the opinions of the uninformed. As you probably know, the uninformed make up a very large portion of the voting population, and these types of ads turn the contest into a "who can lie and slander better" contest rather than one based on the real issues. It is a great injustice to this great country, and you can do something about it. Please work to create meaningful guidelines for the use of our airwaves!

Sincerely,

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